

**STATE PLANNING  
SELF EVALUATION  
STATE OF KANSAS**

**To what extent has a comprehensive, integrated and client-centered legal services delivery system been achieved in a particular state?**

- 1) What are the important issues that impact upon low-income people within your state? How is your state responding to these issues?**

Low-income persons in Kansas are impacted by a full range of legal needs. Low-income Kansans need legal assistance in a wide variety of issue areas including consumer protection, family, juvenile, health, housing, disability/income maintenance and a variety of other areas. Other issues related to legal needs include language barriers and a dispersed rural population throughout much of the state of Kansas. Kansas Legal Services and the Statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee are addressing these issues on an ongoing basis by identifying service gaps, coordinating resources and continually developing additional resources from a variety of sources.

- 2) What are the components of the delivery system?**

The primary components of the delivery system in Kansas include Kansas Legal Services, a state-wide program with twelve field offices, the Kansas Bar Association and their in-kind and *pro bono* resources, the Kansas Office of Judicial Administration, which cooperates directly with Kansas Legal Services and the Kansas Bar Association in meeting the legal needs of low-income persons. Other important stakeholders include the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, Juvenile Justice Authority, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Forum, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the Kansas Department of Human Resources and a variety of other state and private entities.

These entities are now all represented on an ongoing statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee.

- 3) Has the system created mechanisms to assess its performance in relationship to commonly accepted external guides such as the ABA Standards for Providers of Civil Legal Services to the Poor, the LSC Performance Criteria or some other set of objective criteria? What is the protocol for undertaking system performance review and when was a review last undertaken?**

The ABA Standards for Providers of Civil Legal Services to the Poor and the LSC Performance Criteria are carefully examined on an ongoing basis by Kansas Legal Services. Kansas Legal Services has developed a protocol for examining system performance on an annual basis. This process is called the Goals and Objectives Process. It reviews the performance of Kansas Legal Services programs in relation to each funding source and each location throughout the state. The Equal Access to Justice Committee overall review of the performance of the non-KLS components of the system was done in June of 2001.

- 4) Does your statewide system work to ensure the availability of equitable legal assistance capacities to clients – regardless of who the clients are, where they reside or the languages they speak? How does your system ensure that clients have equitable access to necessary assistance including self-help, legal education, advice, brief service, and representation in all relevant forms? Please describe what steps you anticipate taking to ensure equitable access in the coming years.**

The statewide legal services delivery system in Kansas is striving for continuous improvement and wide availability of equitable legal assistance to all potential clients statewide, regardless of the location, language and other potential barriers to access. Kansas Legal Services operates a statewide toll-free call center which provides access to all statewide Kansas Legal Services resources and all Kansas Bar Association pro bono

and self-help services. The statewide call center also includes an Access to Justice Advice Line, which allows direct contact from the Kansas court system to Kansas Legal Services and an Elder Law Hotline, which involves participation by 120 volunteer private attorneys.

Spanish language capability is integrated into the statewide screening and referral system. Kansas Legal Services has a website, [kansaslegalservices.org](http://kansaslegalservices.org) with information available in both English and Spanish. In addition, television advertising is now also in English and Spanish.

We anticipate that the statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee and Kansas Legal Services will continue to take steps to ensure equitable access in the coming years. We believe that equitable access is an ongoing process and not a project to be completed.

Special efforts have been made in recent months to improve access to migrant and seasonal farmworkers. A Kansas Legal Services staff person now serves on the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Forum, a statewide coalition of migrant service providers.

Kansas Legal Services works closely with the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence to train both staff attorneys and private attorneys in safety planning and a variety of aspects of service to domestic violence victims.

Translators are available statewide to assist individuals who speak a language other than English or Spanish.

As a statewide program, Kansas Legal Services has twelve legal assistance field offices that make self-help, legal education, advice, brief service and representation available in a wide range of legal areas. Kansas Legal Services is currently working with the Kansas Office of Judicial Administration to enhance services for individuals who approach the courts as *pro se* litigants or seeking self-help information.

- 5) How does the legal service delivery system employ technology to provide increased access and enhanced services to clients through the state? What technological**

**initiatives are currently underway and how will they support the integrated statewide delivery system?**

The legal services delivery system in Kansas has recently developed the capacity to transfer calls from the central call center directly to any one of Kansas Legal Services' twelve field offices. Instead of faxing an intake sheet from the call center in Wichita to one of our field offices, immediate electronic transfer capacity is now available in emergency cases. The ultimate goal is to transfer all callers to the most appropriate resource without the necessity of a callback or the use of a fax. Kansas Legal Services is currently developing a proposal for an LSC technology grant to enhance central data base capacities. The goal is to allow all offices to be directly connected to the central database and to allow instantaneous up-to-date conflicts checks and statewide access to timekeeping records for reporting, grant development and other administrative uses.

Kansas Legal Services has recently done extensive website development and improvements will be ongoing. Information is now available in both English and Spanish. Electronic research is directly available on the website for all KLS or private attorneys. Access and intake information is available for the client community. Help and information is also available through e-mail. A Kansas Legal Services staff person has been assigned to work directly with a local web developer and has the responsibility of continuous improvement of the website.

- 6) How has the legal service delivery system expanded its resources to provide critical legal services to low income clients including hard to reach groups such as migrant farmworkers, Native Americans, the elderly, those with physical or mental disabilities, those confined to institutions, immigrants and the rural poor?**

Through the statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee the legal services delivery system in Kansas has expanded the availability of a variety of resources to improve communication and coordination. Kansas Legal Services and other service providers are

more aware now than ever before of the resources available and better equipped to coordinate the nonduplicative provisions of those resources to client community needs.

Kansas Legal Services has an LSC migrant grant. With a portion of those resources KLS subcontracts with a service provider from the state of Missouri. A Kansas Legal Services staff person serves on the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Forum, a statewide coordinating group of migrant service providers. A lead migrant staff attorney with Spanish language capability has been designated, as have Spanish speaking intake workers in key locations.

Kansas Legal Services is reviewing and expanding contacts with the Native American tribes in Kansas. Participation of the tribes is extensive on the statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee.

Kansas Legal Services has contracts with all eleven Area Agencies on Aging in Kansas to provide legal assistance to seniors. Regular visits are made to senior centers and meal sites statewide. The service delivery system includes participation by the Kansas Department on Aging, Area Agencies on Aging and other senior citizen service providers.

Legal assistance to individuals with physical or mental disabilities has long been a central component of the legal services delivery system in Kansas. Kansas Legal Services contracts with the Kansas Department on Social and Rehabilitation Services to provide social security disability advocacy for adults and children. Additionally, locations have been reviewed for ADA compliance. Modifications have been made as needed.

The statewide call center, the primary source of contact for the legal services delivery system in Kansas, is available to individuals confined to institutions. Kansas Legal Services attorneys visit clients and prospective clients in institutions when service cannot be provided over the telephone.

The statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee includes several organizations that are capable of providing services to immigrants that are beyond those available from Kansas Legal Services. The level of knowledge and coordination has been enhanced as a result of the state planning process.

The legal service delivery system in Kansas is acutely aware of the special needs of the rural poor. Kansas is a predominately rural state with large areas of low-density rural population. The statewide call center enhances availability to rural populations. The disbursement of Kansas Legal Services field offices in rural communities throughout the state assists in reducing travel time for both staff attorneys and low-income rural clients. The extensive *pro bono* and volunteer attorney programs associated with the Elder Law Hotline and other programs also enhance access to rural residents.

- 7) **What steps have been implemented within the legal services delivery system and among client communities to identify and nurture new leaders? Do the existing leaders reflect the diversity within the state and within client communities that your delivery systems services? Do your state's equal justice leaders reflect the gender, race, ethnic and economic concerns of important but sometimes-overlooked groups within your state? Does the leadership provide opportunities for innovation and experimentation; does it support creative solutions to meet changing needs; are new ideas welcomed; are clients nurtured as leaders? Has the leadership been given sufficient authority and the resources to implement needed changes?**

The statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee provides an excellent way to identify and nurture new leaders for the legal services delivery system in Kansas. The existing leaders in the legal services delivery system/Equal Access to Justice Committee reflect the diversity within the state client communities. There will be a continual effort to enhance the diversity of the Equal Access to Justice Committee members.

Innovation and experimentation have long been key aspects of the legal services delivery system in Kansas. Kansas Legal Services Board of Directors and all twelve local advisory boards include client members. The leadership has been given sufficient authority and resources to implement needed changes. Again, those changes are ongoing. Currently, for example, the state budget shortfalls in Kansas require new and innovative approaches to resource development and service delivery.

**8) What do you envision will be your next steps to achieve a client-centered integrated and comprehensive delivery system within your state or territory? How will clients be actively involved in the determination of these next steps?**

The next steps to achieve a client-centered integrated and comprehensive delivery system within Kansas include continued improvement in communication among all stakeholders. The Statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee has provided a formal vehicle to enhance that communication. Clients will continue to be involved through the Board of Directors of Kansas Legal Services, participation in local field office advisory boards and through participation on the boards and focus groups of the Equal Access to Justice Committee member organizations.

**9) What has been the greatest obstacle to achieving a statewide, integrated, client-centered delivery system and how was that obstacle overcome or, alternatively, how do you plan to overcome that obstacle?**

The greatest obstacle to achieving a statewide, integrated, client-centered delivery system in Kansas is one of habit and orientation. Kansas Legal Services, since it has been a statewide legal assistance program since 1977, tended to under emphasize the participation of other stakeholders. The statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee now includes the widest possible range of stakeholders and has greatly improved the coordination between Kansas Legal Services and other service providers. The interaction is both directional and involves outreach, referral, training and the identification of client

service needs. We plan to continue to improve coordination through the Statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee.

- 10) Has any benefit-to-cost analysis been made in terms of creating a comprehensive, integrated and client-centered legal services delivery system in your state? If yes, what does your analysis show?**

We have not undertaken a cost benefit analysis in the creation of our comprehensive integrated client-centered legal services delivery system.

- 11) What resources, technical assistance and support would help you meet your goals?**

As indicated above, an LSC technology grant assisting with the start up and ongoing costs of improving the computer system would be of great assistance in meeting our goals. Specifically, we intend through LSC funding or other foundation funding to develop the capacity for instantaneous conflict checks for all office locations. This is currently available in our Wichita office only.

**To what extent have intended outcomes of a comprehensive, integrated client-centered legal service delivery system been achieved including but not limited to service effectiveness/quality; efficiency; equity in terms of client access; greater involvement by members of the private bar in the legal lives of clients, and client-community empowerment?**

**Areas of exploration include:**

- 1) In terms of the issues impacting upon low-income persons within your state, what strategies have you designed to address these issues and how do you plan to measure your future success in addressing your objectives?**

The central strategy designed to address the issues impacting upon low-income persons in Kansas is to enhance the coordination provided by the Statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee. Within Kansas Legal Services, a goals and objectives process has been developed which assigns case goals associated with every grant and contract on a



statewide basis. The goals and objectives plan is developed and reviewed on an annual basis. Case goals, training objectives and outreach associated with each special project is reviewed on a continuous basis in the context of state planning and the Equal Access to Justice Committee.

**2) Has the legal services delivery system expanded access and services through coordination with providers through the state? Can this be quantified?**

The legal services delivery system has expanded access to services and coordination with providers throughout the state. The overall improvement cannot be quantified because Kansas Legal Services tracks only the services delivered by its field office program. The level of services offered by other providers in the system has not been collected in a systematic way.

**3) Has the quality of services provided by the legal services delivery system improved. How?**

The quality of legal services provided by the legal services delivery system has improved in a variety of ways. For example, the Memorandum of Understanding between Kansas Legal Services and the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence involves coordinated training opportunities for the staff of both organizations and local domestic violence service providers. Training has enhanced the awareness of and sensitivity to safety planning issues on the part of legal service attorneys and improved the knowledge of legal issues by domestic violence advocates.

The closer coordination between Kansas Legal Services and the migrant services community has improved knowledge of service gaps on both sides. The collaborative effort between the Office of Judicial Administration and Kansas Legal Services has made possible direct contact between the two organizations and the direct referral of clients from the court system to legal services. Fewer *pro se* litigants, for example, fell through the cracks with this current system. Training, outreach and service coordination all

improved with closer collaboration among the members of the legal services delivery system.

- 4) **Since 1998, has there been improvement in the relative equity of client access throughout the state for all low-income clients regardless of who they are, where in the state they reside, what languages they speak, their race/gender/national origin, or the existence of other access barriers? How is this equity achieved?**

Greater equity of client access has been achieved in Kansas since 1998. The statewide call center has been expanded and improved access. Technology used in the call center has been refined. The coordination among service providers mentioned above has been a key component in this improvement.

- 5) **Since 1998, has there been improvement in the relative equity in terms of the availability of the full range of civil equal justice delivery capacities throughout the state? What mechanisms have been developed to ensure such relative equity is achieved and maintained? Since 1998, has there been improvement in the relative equity in the development and distribution of civil equal justice resources throughout the state? Are there areas of the state that suffer from a disproportionate lack of resources (funding as well as in-kind/*pro bono*)? If so, is there a strategy to overcome such inequities?**

There has also been improvement in the relative equity in terms of the availability of the full range of civil legal justice delivery capacities throughout Kansas. Kansas Legal Services monitors service levels in all service areas throughout the state in relation to poverty population. Resources can be directed to areas with relatively low service levels. The Kansas Bar Association monitors the availability of *pro bono* services, focusing recruitment efforts in areas that are under served. Kansas Legal Services and the Office of Judicial Administration are working to obtain funding for *pro bono* and self-help services to enhance the availability of such services in rural areas. Kansas Legal Services

is also applying for ABA *pro bono* resources. The Emporia area is currently underserved. The strategy to overcome inequalities is one of ongoing monitoring and resource development.

**6) Does this legal services delivery system operate efficiently? Are there areas of duplication?**

We believe the legal services delivery system in Kansas operates efficiently. There is always room for improvement. Kansas Legal Services is a statewide legal assistance provider. There are no areas of duplication within the legal services community. However, the Equal Access to Justice Committee and state planning process allow identification of the resources available by other service providers that was not available before. The intake staff at the call center in Wichita are continually educated about resources available in part to avoid duplication.

**7) Has the system expanded the way it involves private lawyers in the delivery of essential services to low-income persons? Does the system effectively and efficiently use the private bar to deliver essential services to low-income people?**

The statewide delivery system in Kansas has expanded the way it involves private lawyers in the delivery of essential services to low-income persons. For example, the Elder Law Hotline, a statewide program operated from the Wichita call center, has 120 private bar attorneys who offer free legal assistance to seniors on a statewide basis. The Office of Judicial Administration, the Kansas Bar Association and Kansas Legal Services are working cooperatively to expand private bar participation, *pro bono* and other private bar participation. One way in which the system works effectively and efficiently is through the coordination of Bar programs in Kansas Legal Services staff offices. The Kansas Bar Association funds Kansas Legal Services to administer local bar programs to assure that those programs are closely coordinated with staff services. Similarly, Kansas

Legal Services funds the Kansas Bar Foundation as a subgrant to encourage close collaboration and expansion of private bar programs.

**Are the best organizational and human resource management configurations and approaches being used?**

**Areas of exploration include:**

- 1) For calendar year 2001, what is the current configuration of programs (LSC and non-LSC) that deliver services to low-income clients – i.e., what are the components (size, areas of responsibility, governance) of the delivery system? What are the funding sources and levels for each of these components of the delivery system?**

Kansas Legal Services is the only LSC grantee in the State of Kansas. Kansas Legal Services has twelve field offices, all with local advisory boards and one statewide governing board. The statewide budget for the Kansas Legal Services delivery system is \$8,880,000 for 2002. Of that funding, \$2,444,983 will be provided by the Legal Services Corporation. The Kansas Bar Association is also a statewide organization with a variety of funding sources. The Office of Judicial Administration is statewide and funded by the Kansas Legislature and federal sources.

Major non-LSC funding sources for Kansas Legal Services include the Access to Justice Fund which comes from the Office of Judicial Administration, the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the Area Agencies on Aging, United Way and numerous other federal, state and local grants and contracts.

- 2) Since October 1998, what other configurations and/or approaches have been seriously explored? Were any adopted? Were any rejected? Are any changes contemplated in the coming year?**

Kansas Legal Services is a component of a statewide legal services delivery system. No other configurations have been contemplated.

- 3) Is there any identifiable duplication in capacities or services in the state? How many duplicative systems – accounting systems, human resource management systems, case management systems, etc. – currently exist? Does the service delivery system now in use minimize or eliminate duplications that existed prior to October 1, 1998?**

The statewide delivery system in Kansas avoids unnecessary duplication in capacities or services. Kansas Legal Services has one accounting system, one human resources management system, one case management system, etc.

- 4) Since October 1998, what innovative service delivery systems/mechanisms/initiatives been adopted in the state? Have any been explored and then rejected?**

Since October 1998, innovative initiatives adopted in Kansas have been the development of the statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee. The existence of the state planning process has greatly improved coordination of service delivery statewide. Technological innovations mentioned above are also a key component of enhancing the innovative service delivery system in Kansas. At one point there was consideration given to greatly expanding the advice and brief service component of service delivery while reducing the availability of more extensive representation. We now believe that both components need to develop together. Kansas Legal Services, in collaboration with the statewide Equal Access to Justice Committee, intends to maintain substantial resources for extensive representation to low-income clients, and to expand the availability of advice and brief service.